In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A conjugate comprising:

(a) at least one therapeutic compound; and

(b) one or more PEG polymers and/or oligomers, each joined to a bonding site on the therapeutic compound by a hydrolyzable bond, said PEG polymers and/or oligomers each:

(i) comprising a straight or branched PEG segment consisting of 1 to 25 polyethylene glycol units; and

(ii) comprising a salt-forming moiety.

2. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the conjugate is a prodrug.

3. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the straight or branched PEG segment consists of from 2 to 20 polyethylene glycol units.

4. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the polyethylene glycol oligomer has a number of polyethylene glycol units selected from the group consisting of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9.

5. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the salt-forming moiety is selected from the group consisting of: ammonium, carboxylate, phosphate, sulfate and mesylate.

6. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic compound is derivatized by from 1 up to the maximum number of sites of attachment for the polyethylene glycol oligomer(s).

7. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, which, when delivered via the oral route of administration to treat a mammalian subject having a disease condition responsive to the therapeutic compound, provides a therapeutically effective dose of the therapeutic compound to the blood.

8. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic compound is a peptide.

9. (Original) The conjugate of claim 1, wherein the therapeutic compound is a protein.

10. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising:

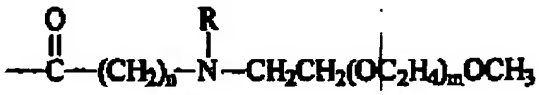
(c) a conjugate of claim 1; and

(d) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

11. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 10, wherein the conjugate is a prodrug.

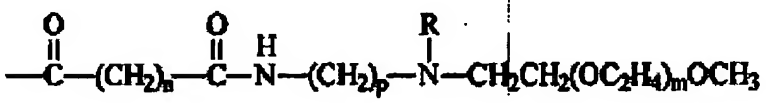
12. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 10 in a form suitable for oral administration.

13. (Original) A conjugate comprising a therapeutic compound joined by hydrolysable bond(s) to one or more PEG oligomer(s) selected from the group consisting of:



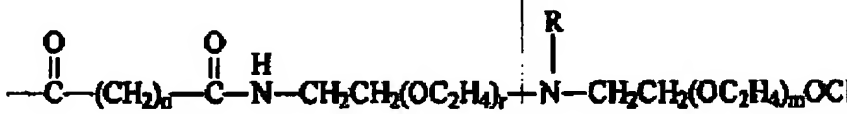
(Formula 2)

wherein n is from 1 to 7, m is from 2 to 25, and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



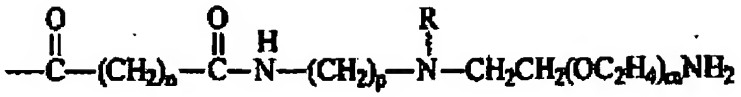
(Formula 3)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25, and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



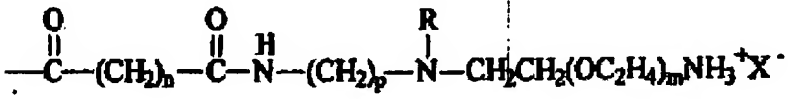
(Formula 4)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, m and r are each independently from 2 to 25, and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



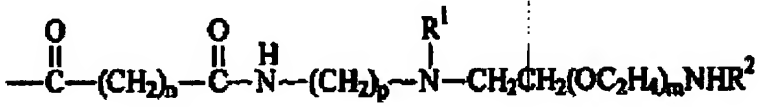
(Formula 5)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25 and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



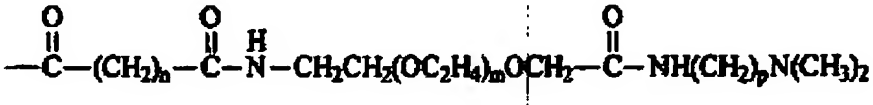
(Formula 6)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25, R is hydrogen or lower alkyl, and X^- is a negative ion;



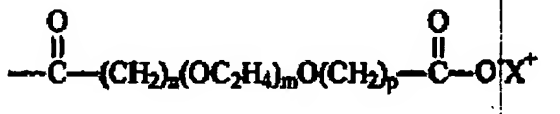
(Formula 7)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25, and R^1 and R^2 are each independently hydrogen or lower alkyl;



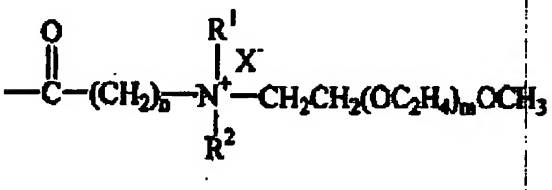
(Formula 8)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8 and m is from 2 to 25;



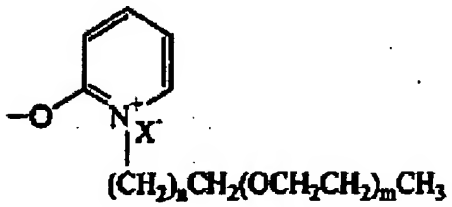
(Formula 9)

wherein n and p are each independently from 1 to 6, m is from 2 to 25 and X^+ is a positive ion;



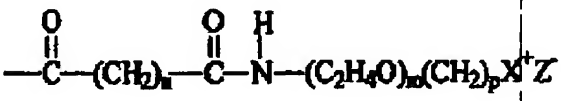
(Formula 10)

wherein n is from 1 to 5, m is from 2 to 25, X^- is a negative ion, and wherein R^1 and R^2 are each independently hydrogen or lower alkyl;



(Formula 11)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, m is from 2 to 25 and X^- is a negative ion; and



(Formula 12)

wherein n is from 1 to 12, m is from 2 to 25, p is from 2 to 12, X^+ is a positive ion and Z^- is a negative ion.

14. (Original) The conjugate of claim 13, wherein the conjugate is a prodrug.

15. (Original) The conjugate of claim 13, wherein the therapeutic compound is derivatized by from 1 up to the maximum number of sites of attachment for the polyethylene glycol oligomer(s).

16. (Original) The conjugate of claim 13, wherein the therapeutic compound is a peptide.

17. (Original) The conjugate of claim 13, wherein the therapeutic compound is a protein.

18. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition comprising:

(e) a conjugate of claim 13; and

(f) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

19. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 18, wherein the conjugate is a prodrug.

20. (Original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 18 in a form suitable for oral administration.

21. (Withdrawn) A method of treating a mammalian subject having a disease condition responsive to a therapeutic compound, said method comprising administering to the subject of an effective disease treating amount of a conjugate comprising:

(g) at least one therapeutic compound; and

(h) one or more PEG polymers and/or oligomers, each joined to a bonding site on the therapeutic compound by a hydrolyzable bond, said PEG polymers and/or oligomers each:

(i) comprising a straight or branched PEG segment consisting of 1 to 25 polyethylene glycol units; and

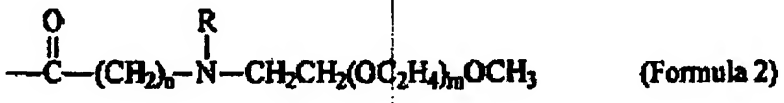
(ii) comprising a salt-forming moiety.

22. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 21, wherein the conjugate is a prodrug.

23. (Withdrawn) The conjugate of claim 21, wherein the therapeutic compound is a peptide.

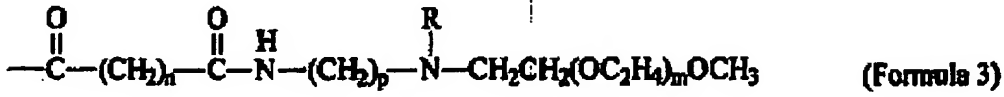
24. (Withdrawn) The conjugate of claim 21, wherein the therapeutic compound is a protein.

25. (Withdrawn) A method of treating a mammalian subject having a disease condition responsive to a therapeutic compound, said method comprising administering to the subject of an effective disease treating amount of a conjugate comprising the therapeutic compound joined by hydrolyzable bond(s) to one or more PEG oligomer(s) selected from the group consisting of:



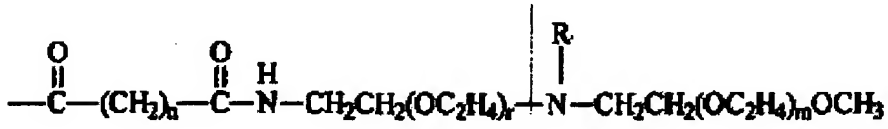
(Formula 2)

wherein n is from 1 to 7, m is from 2 to 25, and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



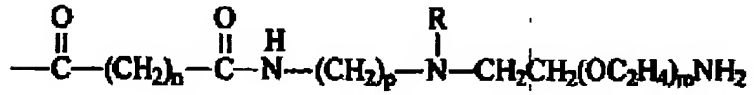
(Formula 3)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25, and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



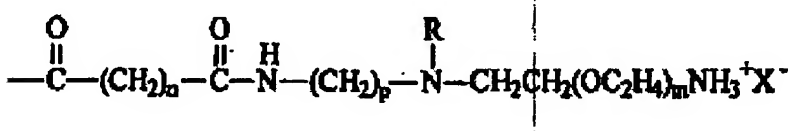
(Formula 4)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, m and r are each independently from 2 to 25, and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



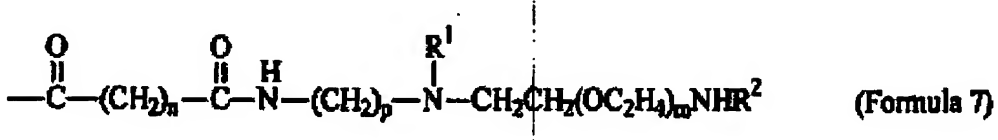
(Formula 5)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25 and R is hydrogen or lower alkyl;



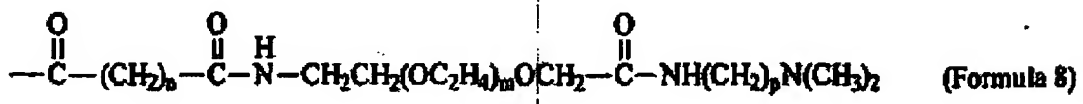
(Formula 6)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25, R is hydrogen or lower alkyl, and X^- is a negative ion;



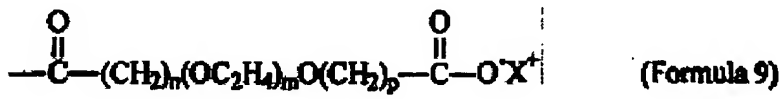
(Formula 7)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8, m is from 2 to 25, and R^1 and R^2 are each independently hydrogen or lower alkyl;



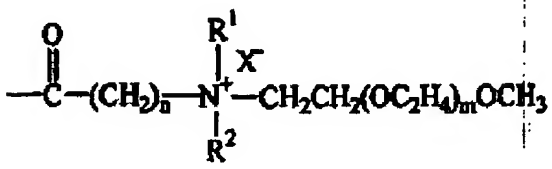
(Formula 8)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, p is from 2 to 8 and m is from 2 to 25;



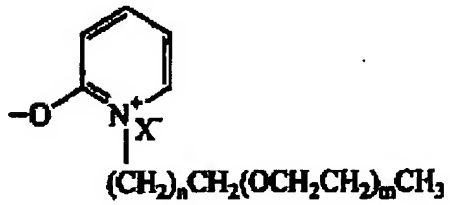
(Formula 9)

wherein n and p are each independently from 1 to 6, m is from 2 to 25 and X^+ is a positive ion;



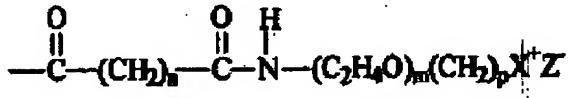
(Formula 10)

wherein n is from 1 to 5, m is from 2 to 25, X^- is a negative ion, and wherein R^1 and R^2 are each independently hydrogen or lower alkyl;



(Formula 11)

wherein n is from 1 to 6, m is from 2 to 25 and X^- is a negative ion; and



(Formula 12)

wherein n is from 1 to 12, m is from 2 to 25, p is from 2 to 12, X^+ is a positive ion and Z^- is a negative ion.

26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the conjugate is a prodrug.

27. (Withdrawn) The conjugate of claim 25, wherein the therapeutic compound is a peptide.

28. (Withdrawn) The conjugate of claim 25, wherein the therapeutic compound is a protein.